

Hi to all...

Please forward to your members.

You may have seen yesterday's press release from OPSEU concerning the Ontario Federation of Labour's unanimous condemnation of the college's imposition of terms and conditions of employment.

We anticipate the Council will respond. And we anticipate that the Council's response will contain the same positions they have maintained all along, that the union's offer is unaffordable and that they are not union busting.

Of course it is union busting to deny the union's right to represent members through grievances, to decentralize arbitrations, to stack the list of arbitrators, to allow colleges to decide whether or not they ever meet with the union local. Now the whole labour movement has seen it and condemned it for what it truly is.

The Colleges have correctly tied the issue of affordability to wage bargaining. But they seriously jumped the gun. The bargaining talks have focused on workload - rightly so. The union at no time indicated that our salary position was final. There is a lot more to be talked about including funding levels, all college compensation packages, fiscal accountability, recent referent group settlements, government statements, and economic climate projections. The union remains fully willing to have meaningful discussions on salary. In fact, the union was tabling revised salary positions and inviting discussion even as the colleges abruptly ended talks and imposed terms.

The real issue is and has been the colleges' unwillingness to implement all the recommendations of the Workload Task Force.

Reaching a settlement which is fair, properly measured, and affordable should be possible if Council will resolve to negotiate in good faith.

Ted Montgomery
for the team.